



## **U.S. Department of Justice**

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### **HUMAN REMAINS RECOVERED AT DIG SITE IN PEABODY MASSACHUSETTS**

Boston...U.S. Attorney Michael J. Sullivan and Essex County District Attorney Jonathan Blodgett, have announced that, after extensive digging operations over the course of the last six months on a hillside near the Welch School in Peabody, MA, law enforcement personnel today have recovered human remains believed to be those of Aislin Silva, who was killed in 1996 by members of the DeCologero Crew, a drug gang that operated out of a gym in Woburn run by Paul A. DeCologero, the Crew's leader.

Pending forensic confirmation, today's discovery will likely bring to a close the ten-year investigation by the United States Attorney's Office, the Essex County District Attorney's Office, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives, the Massachusetts State Police, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and various local police departments. Today's discovery follows the conclusion of the federal prosecution of members of the DeCologero Crew on RICO charges that included witness tampering and the witness tampering killing of Aislin Silva.

United States Attorney Michael Sullivan said, "Today's recovery of what we believe to be the remains of Aislin Silva, concludes the investigation into her disappearance and murder. Ms. Silva was 19 year old woman at the time she was brutally murdered by members of the

Decologero crew. I am gratified that the tireless and passionate search by so many people allowed Aislin to go home to her family. I want to commend the Essex County District Attorney Jon Blodgett, the Massachusetts State Police, the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Massachusetts Highway Department and all of the individual investigators and site workers involved for their relentless effort to find Aislin,” concluded Sullivan.

“We were determined to bring Aislin Silva home to her family,” said Essex District Attorney Jonathan W. Blodgett. “What they have had to endure is unspeakable, and I hope that the discovery of Aislin’s remains will help them find some sense of peace and closure. I would like to thank the investigators, the Massachusetts Highway Department, and so many others worked tirelessly to ensure this outcome,” said District Attorney Blodgett. “I also extend my gratitude to U.S. Attorney Michael Sullivan, with whom we worked every step of the way.”

On September 28, 2006, and after an earlier nine-week trial, Paul A. DeCologero, age 48, and formerly of Burlington, MA, was sentenced in federal court to life imprisonment for, among other offenses, ordering the killing of Aislin Silva, then a 19-year old resident of Medford, MA. At the same trial, Paul J. DeCologero, age 32, and formerly of Lowell, MA, was convicted of conspiring to and attempting to kill Aislin Silva, and was subsequently sentenced to 25 years in prison, and Joseph Pavone, age 33, and formerly of Burlington, MA, was convicted of witness tampering, and subsequently sentenced to six years in prison. At an earlier trial in the spring of 2005, Derek Capozzi, age 33, and formerly of Beverly, MA, was convicted of being an accessory after the fact to the murder of Aislin Silva and sentenced to 23 years in prison.

The evidence at the RICO trial established that members of the DeCologero Crew stashed a small arsenal of weapons at the Medford apartment of Ms. Silva, who was a friend of a Crew

member. After the guns were discovered by police and federal agents, the DeCologero Crew took steps to keep Ms. Silva away from law enforcement, and killed her eight days later in order to ensure that she could not cooperate with law enforcement and be a witness against them.